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## WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Office of Marketing Services

Marketing Reports Division

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Western Region

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWSWeek ending February 9, 1945FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:

Potatoes: The shipment embargo of last week has been extended to include the Red River Valley section of Nebraska and North Dakota and Colorado. At present it does not appear that this will affect supplies in the Western Region. ICC order 330 has been amended to remove from that order Idaho, Maine, Colorado, North Dakota, and Minnesota. Reason for this is that WFO 120 is now in effect in those states and places a similar restriction on movement of potatoes.

Improved weather conditions have moved more potatoes into wholesale markets, with the result that 765 cars were shipped out of Idaho the past week, 1,579 cars from Maine, and 5,267 cars in the U. S. Season's total to date: Idaho 26,208 cars, U. S. 200,288 cars; compared with 26,737 cars for Idaho and 215,796 for the U. S. in 1944 same date.

Prices have remained at ceiling. Some Maine potatoes have reached the western markets, and some seed from the Klamath section has sold on the fresh vegetable markets. Demand exceeds supply. Present favorable weather conditions will assist in relieving the supply situation, but not before late in April, when early potato sections may start digging. Kern County, California, early potato section, although troubled with a possible shortage of commercial fertilizer, has prospects of a 45,000 acre planting.

Lettuce: The embargo on shipments plus rainy weather in the Western Region producing sections, reduced rail volume the past week to 1,164 cars, compared with 1,702 cars the week previous when an Imperial Valley all-time record daily peak of 336 cars was reached. U. S. movement the past week was 1,176 cars. Total to date for the season: Western Region 8,506 cars, U. S. 24,052 cars. U. S. total past season to same date 21,469 cars.

Fob shipping point price at Brawley, California for the close of the week was the same as for the corresponding week in 1944 -- \$2.25 per crate of 4 to 5 dozen heads. Wholesale prices on the western markets ranged from \$2.50 per crate of fours and fives in the southwest, to \$3.75 in the northwest; top prices for good quality stock, other grades lower.

Peas: Late winter and early spring green peas have been moving out of Imperial Valley, California, the past few weeks, with a new crop just entering the harvest period. Since January 1, 1945, 88 cars have been shipped from Western Region sections, and 137 cars from all early points in the U. S. During the past week 25 cars were moved from the Western Region, and 29 from the U. S.

On the California wholesale markets, peas in bushel baskets brought top prices of \$3.50 to \$4.00, and in the Pacific Northwest \$4.70 to \$4.75. (Bu = 30 pounds)

(over)

Oranges: Shipping restrictions on California fruits and vegetables the past week resulted in fewer oranges reaching market from this area: only 874 cars compared with 1,130 the previous week. 2,429 cars were shipped from all producing sections in the U. S. Total carlot movement this season to date: 35,702 cars, compared with 36,825 cars last season to the same date.

Wholesale prices ranged mostly \$4.50 for 288s and smaller, to \$5.25 for 200s and larger on the northwest markets. In the southwest prices at the close of the week were generally \$1.00 less than in the northwest.

#### PRICE SUPPORT:

Details of the price support program for the 1944 pack of canned vegetables has been announced by the War Food Administration. Detailed announcement is contained in release U. S. D. A. 173--45, dated February 7, 1945.

#### DAIRY AND POULTRY:

Poultry: Additional events the past week indicate a further shortening of dressed poultry supplies for civilians. Heavier military demands have been made on all supplies of canned boned chicken and turkey under the 100 percent set-aside order WFO 125, effective February 14, 1945. As the result of the order 200 to 250 million pounds of dressed poultry will be processed, requiring the full use of all available poultry eviscerating and processing plants in the United States. Evisceration of chickens and turkeys is limited to "authorized Poultry Eviscerators", who must set aside all eviscerated chicken and turkey until it is: (1) purchased or rejected by the U. S. Army Quartermaster Market Center, (2) released by QMC for sale to another government agency, (3) sold to an Authorized Poultry Canner", or held for canning by eviscerators who are also authorized canners, (4) delivered to a cold storage plant in which it will continue to be set-aside, or (5) released by director of OMS, WFA.

Indications prior to the order were that civilian supplies for the first half of 1945 would be less than last year, and that prices would remain pressing ceiling as the result of strong civilian and military demand.

Demand the past week has exceeded available supplies and receipts in all the markets of the west continued at the seasonal low point, which is even lower than normal.

Eggs: Production on the increase: Even so, receipts on the western markets the past week were as much as 18 percent under those of last year at the same period. Demand continued in excess of available supplies, but was less pronounced than a week earlier.

Butter: Slightly increased production was noticeable the past week on the West Coast, and demand was less than the week previous, apparently because of increased use of margarine. Continued warm growing weather with rain may hasten anticipated production increases.

#### LIVESTOCK AND MEATS:

Cattle: Receipts for the past week on the four western markets increased 12 percent over the previous week to a total of 19,830 head. There was also a slight increase on the twelve principal markets: 232,400 head the past week compared with 230,838 head for the previous week.



Top prices for good fed steers ranged \$15.00 to \$17.35, and some feeder lots brought \$12.75 to \$13.75.

Outlook for good range pasture is improving with the recent warm rains on the Pacific slope and southwest range areas. The warmer sections are already furnishing good early grass feed.

Hogs: Ceiling prices prevailed past week on all support weight barrows and gilts on the four western markets. Sows carried top prices ranging from \$12.50 to \$15.00.

Receipts continued at low levels with the twelve principle markets down 3 percent from the previous week to 239,900 head, and the four western markets down to 87 percent of the previous week, or 9,732 head.

Sheep: Receipts on the western markets reversed during the past week, and dropped 16 percent from the previous week to 20,017 head, while on the twelve principal markets there was a slight increase from a final total of 232,769 head to 239,500 head.

Prices on most markets were up about 25 cents at the close of the week, although the range in top prices was quite wide (\$14.50 to \$16.50) and no higher than the previous week. Demand on live weight stock and dressed carcasses was strong.

#### GRAIN PRODUCTS:

Wheat: Recent rains in the Pacific Northwest have improved prospects for the 1945 crop from that area.

The Portland market was reported as slightly weaker at the close of the week than a week earlier. 11 percent protein hard wheat was being taken. Offerings on other wheats were few. CCC was not in the market the past week.

Australian drought has resulted in the 1944 wheat crop in that country being the smallest since 1919: 50,000,000 bushels, or only one third the pre-war level.

Canadian estimates place the 1944 prairie province crop at 411,000,000 bushels, compared with 268,000,000 bushels for 1943.

Rice: Effective February 13, 1945, amended WFO 10 increases set-aside to 60 percent of all milled rice of acceptable grades in California and southern states. Previous percentages were 25 for southern states and 35 for California. Acceptable grades must be grade 4 or better, or grade 5 provided it does not contain more than 20 percent broken rice.

WFA reports that while this new set-aside will reduce the supplies available for domestic consumption, stocks are adequate for present needs.

Barley: Producing areas in the Pacific Northwest report lighter than normal supplies of barley remaining in the hands of growers, who are showing a tendency to hold for future sales.

PLH/2/13/45

